Chapter-V

A DIVISION OF SPOILS
(Returned Home, Eccentric Inhabitants and Rituals, Tyranny,
Rhythm of Those Days)

Introduction

The Raj’s nausea and death are continued in the final volume, The Division of Spoils (1975), Paul Scott’s monumental The Raj Quartet. The Raj Quartet stands for Scott’s vision of the world. Scott, beginning as an amateurish novelist wrote Johnnie Sahib (1952) and The Alien Sky (1953) with the conventional idea of the Novel as story, as propounded by E.M Forster. He later developed his own concept of the Novel as Image in A Male Child (1956) and The Mark of the Warrior (1958). He also published finely honed novels like The Chinese Love Pavilion (1960), The Birds of Paradise (1962), The Bender (1963) and The Corrida at San Feliu (1964). These novels embody the inlaid significant symbols. For instance, the Chinese building of the love pavilion, a cage of the birds of the paradise, a coin and the bullfight, which, in their own way contribute to the overall meaning of the form.

Scott, being Kipling’s and E.M. Forster’s successor, concerns himself in The Quartet, with the ‘closing years of British rule in India’ differ in their choice of the period of British-Indian history. Kipling, who belonged to the ‘era of pride’ and imperial expansion, captures a “sense of pride in British accomplishment, a faith in the success of ‘imperial purpose’. Scott, who on the contrary, belonged to the ‘era of melancholy’, laments the failure of the imperial ideals” (Weinbaum, p.101).

*These lines from the text hereafter shall be mentioned with the page numbers.
As V.R. Badiger illustrates Paul Scott’s achievement as a novelist in his work *Paul Scott: His Art and Vision* that

There are some notable similarities between Scott and John Fowles, a post-modernist, as they in common speak of the complexity of the creative process of the novel in their novels. Scott honestly quotes Fowles personal experience of visualising a significant image as the beginning of the creative process of the novel. Scott’s fictional world seems with innumerable characters and of all classes, where as Fowles has very few intensively drawn characters (p. 106).

*The Quartet* charts over an eight years period, the interaction between British Colonials. Many of them are military. *The Quartet* begins with an assault on an English schoolteacher and the rape of young English woman, and ends with the boisterous independence of India and its division into two nations, India and Pakistan.

The story, *A Division of Spoils* is set in 1945 and 1947 in several locations throughout India, particularly in an unnamed province of northern India. The capital of the province is Ranpur. The princely state of Mirat is a nominally sovereign enclave within the province. “Pankot, a hill station in the province serves as a head quarter for the 1st Pankot Rifles, an important regiment of the Indian Army. The regiment moves to Ranpur during cool season. At Premanagar there is an old fortification that is used by the British as a prison. Muzzafirabad town is the headquarter of the Muzzafirabad guides another Indian Army regiment” (*en.wikipedia.org*).

The story covers in the decamping of the British. The precipitous concession of power fiercely bent on division. The partition of India and the consequent holocaust turned out to be a great reservoir for the novelists who weaved it, within the imaginative scenes, stories and settings. These novels assimilate real history to a fictional narrative prompting the reader to “consider not only the relations between the fictional world and
reality, but the relation between reality and fiction within the novel’s imaginary world” (Scanlon, 1990, p. 336).

**Returned Home**

Paul Scott’s use of history provides the relationship between the historical conscience and the creative freedom of literary imagination. Scott uses the imprisonment of Congress members and the civil disturbances at the time of partition to frame the narrative. Employing the device of the cartoons Scott presents the situation of August 1947. In an editor’s room, guy Perron, an intelligence operative in India Army, comes across a collection of cartoons by the Cartoonist Halki with brilliant irony the cartoons present portraits of the major political leaders like Jinnah, Nehru, Wavell etc. Paul Scott’s association with India began when he first went to India as an N.C.O. in 1943 and during his three years stay in this country, he travelled widely acquiring firsthand experience of life in British India during the crucial forties.

*The Quartet* reveals the backdrop of one of the most turbulent periods of social change in the last days of British India. The British Raj gave English people the chance to live and work like a ruling class. British women need social rules to preserve their sense of social unassailability. Hari Kumar’s anglicised background alienated him as unacceptable to the British community. Returned home to India, Hari Kumar, attracted by Daphne Manners who naturally claims to be an upper class. When Daphne Manners declares her allegiance to Hari Kumar the power of the taboo to keep the outsider at bay is challenged. These women need social rules to preserve their sense of social impregnability. Lady Manners, though saddened by her niece death, does not condemn Kumar.
Scott illustrates Mohammed Ali Kasim’s return to his former prison at Premanagar. “It had originally been a Rajput fort. The Muslims had conquered it. It was they who had built the mosque and the zenana house in the inner courtyard where Kasim had spent his imprisonment. The Maratas had invested it. The British had acquired it, so much history in so insignificant a monument? Insignificant, that was to say, in relation to the vast stretches of the Indian plain” (p. 397).

Governor Malcolm tells Mohammad Ali Kasim, the nationalist Muslim about the resignation of congress to their ministries. Scott views that Jinnah is responsible for instigating the Indian Muslims and going against the leadership of Gandhi. Scott explains symbolically by cartoon about the detachment of Jinnah from the other congress leaders and his interest in separate state.

This cartoon, unpublished and dated 20, September 1945, was captioned ‘Box-Wallah’ and portrayed Wavell in the garb of an itinerant Indian merchant and purveyor of ladies, dress materials, squatting on his hunkers on the verandah of a European bungalow, recommending his wares to a gathering of memsahib who bore remarkable resemblances to Bapu, Nehru, Patel, Tara Singh, Maulana Azad and Mohammed Ali Jinnah. Jinnah was sitting somewhat apart from ‘her’ colleagues, consulting a glossy magazine marked. ‘The Pakistan Ladies’, ‘Home Journal’ but none of them was responding to the pleas of the box-wallah or to the sight of the valance of Sikhs and woolens he was flinging hopefully in all directions (lengths) ‘New Executive Council – Indian patterns’; Central Assembly Dress Lengths (for cold weather wear); Constituent Assembly Fashion Designs. For All Seasons; ‘ Provincial Election Lengths Graded Prices’; ‘Dominion Status Fabrics’ (Slightly Soiled, p. 457).

The Partition remorselessly divided friends, families, lovers and neighbours in both India and Pakistan the images of Gandhi and Jinnah. But by the assessment of the images of Gandhi and Jinnah differ with their views. Bapsi Sidhwa and Chaman Nahal have shown the similar perspectives on the calamities of vulnerability of human lives. Bapsi Sidhwa’s Ice-Candy-Man does not uphold the ‘Two-Nation Theory’ behind the
creation of Pakistan. Bapsi does not stress the belief of Pakistani Muslims in the creation of the Pakistan. Sidhwa tried to distort the image of Gandhi. Bapsi tries to idealise Jinnah’s image though it is seen that Jinnah is responsible for the partition. *Ice-Candy Man* is far too subtle to state a direct political view. Sidhwa provides an alternative view of Jinnah and appears to be praising him. Sidhwa seeks the artistic imagination to historical consciousness. Sidhwa writes about the way Jinnah has been treated in India and British histories attempting Indian versions of history instead of a Pakistani version. “And today, forty years later, in films of Gandhi’s and Mountbatten’s lives in books by British and Indian Scholars, Jinnah, who for a decade was known as ‘Ambassador of Hindu Muslim unity’, is caricatured and portrayed as a monster” (p. 160).

Sidhwa’s illustration of Gandhi visiting Lahore in history may not be historically accurate but it is fictionally true. In re-imaging Jinnah, Sidhwa displays the important presence of hindsight in her fiction. Scott’s final book of the sequence of *The Raj Quartet A Division of Spoils* deals with the interlocking events by brilliantly drawn threads. The story opens with the historical end of the Second World War. Scott presents a theory of human history returning again and again to the same key events. The narrator dramatised particular events in individual human history folding and tracing outcomes back to their beginnings. Though the characters dominate the story back drop of a world at war is always present. A picture of those fateful years in the destinies of two great nations should have been composed. If Scott were able to achieve this, then a student of history years from now should be able to say to his professor, ‘Yes, but what was it really like in India in the last days of the Raj?’ and be told, ‘Read these four books and you will not only know, you’ll understand’ (*Sunday Times*, May 4, 1975).
Eccentric Inhabitants and Rituals

Scott tries to make the historical events intelligible. *Quartet* carries the states of mind and attitudes to reality demonstrated in characters, narratives, literary or historical are fictional in representing objective reality. The story, *A Division of Spoils* carries forward to the British retreat in 1947. Guy Perron, a new character sergeant in field security is introduced. He is brought into contact with Ronald Merrick and Sarah Layton. *The Raj Quartet* does not end on a depressing note despite the horrors of partition experienced by the Laytons and their fellow travellers. The dilemma in which both English and Indians found themselves during the years leading up to Independence is contained in one of Guy Perron’s notebooks. Perron makes a note after the deplorable party when he finds his flat-mate Leonard Purvis bleeding into his bath after an unsuccessful attempt at suicide. Perron contributes the substance in his writing about Ronald Merrick’s conversation with Purvis in regard to the political situation at the end of the war in Maharanee’s party. From the other side of the Imperial relationship, Scott allows both the profound and the trivial differences of opinion among the Muslim, Hindu and congress politicians in the behaviour of people like Mohammed Ali Kasim, Pandit Baba and the Nawab of Mirat. Rowan, Brownsky, Sir George Malcolm and several members of Kasim’s family interpret in an articulate way, the Indian situation is seen in the form of letters, diaries, conversations, notebooks etc. The British Government on 20 February 1946 set the stage for the independence of India.

In March 1947, Lord Louis Mountbatten, great grandson of Queen Victoria was deputed to India as a Viceroy. On June 3rd 1947, Mountbatten declared the intention of the British Government to leave India in a period of eleven weeks. Another
announcement according to which freedom was accompanied by partition of the nation into two-India and Pakistan followed this announcement. A boundary commission was set up in order to work out the technicalities of the partition. The commission demarcates the boundaries of the two parts of the Punjab and Bengal, the contiguous majority areas of Muslims and non-Muslims. Sir Cyril Radcliffe used ‘a butcher’s axe’ to perform his vivisection of Punjab and Bengal. The task of Punjab boundary commission was rather difficult than in Bengal, because of the claims the three committees - Muslims, Hindus and Sikhs.

Daphne Manners and Edwina Crane have an ample social life. Daphne’s aunt Lili Chatterjee arranges parties in MacGregor’s house where the British meet the Indians. Daphne Manners visits British club in Mayapore where the British young people meet. Both of them feel pride for being British. The superiority destroys them in the end. They are trapped in the ideology of the British Empire. Both women commit suicide. Miss Manners dies during the childbirth, which is classified as a suicide as she knows that there will be a problem with natural delivery. Daphne and Crane perceive the Indians as a subordinate race that needs some help from their backwardness. Miss Manners refuses surgery during delivery. She wants her daughter with mixed blood representing New Hope that the Indian and the British can coexist as two equal elements.

Daphne compares the Indian conceit to the sleeping God Vishnu. God Vishnu is ready to wake up at any moment and use the thunder to crack an enemy. Indian minds see God Shiva dancing in the silence in a circle of cosmic fire. His right foot is pressing down the little demon and left leg is kicking up. The first pair of arms is invitingly gesturing and the second pair is holding the circle of flame. The silence of god Shiva
symbolises the submission of the Indian nation. But the British were unable to recognise Indian wisdom and power. Similarly Miss Crane and Miss Manners create their own silence in the end. They do not want to continue the violence neither of them tells the police anything about the crime and they deeply feel and regret their part of guilt. The Indians seem to have betrayed them, but they understand them now and do not betray them back.

Edwina Crane and Daphne Manners characters represent British women who volunteer to live in India. The women unconsciously adopt the idea of the white superiority. They like India and its people. But remain ignorant to the real situation. Daphne’s Parvati, mulatto daughter is the chance for the new order, new rules and relations between the British and the Indians. She is brought up by Lili Chatterjee who represent the old Indian culture and traditions. Indian women Lili Chatterjee and Shalini Gupta-Sen bring old oriental wisdom to the novel. History and literature constitutes systems of signification by which we make sense of the post. According to Lionel Gossman, “literature has come to be increasingly preoccupied with language as the instrument of meaning, whereas history may well dream of escaping from ordinary or natural language to the highly formal languages of the sciences” (pp.255-56).

Tyranny

The English do not have real sympathies for the sufferings of the Indians. Scott paints equally harsh pictures of the British attitude to the natives when he writes, “The arises of the Suleimans of India exist to be booted by British Sergeant, two for the regiment and three for the Raj. And then the women of the Suleimans of India will laugh
like drains, the wild dogs of the hills will yelp their satisfaction and there will be peace again” (p. 205).

The influence of E.M. Forster’s pioneering novel, *A passage to India* is seen on Paul Scott. Forster in his two visits had seen the sufferings, the oppression and the tyranny, which the Indian had to face out the hands of the British bureaucrats. “The British Raj could be imprisoned without trial. It was even punishable for shopkeepers to close their shops at an unappointed time. To hear of these things to read of them, to consider them now, an element of disbelief enters. At the time was not so” (*The Jewel in the Crown*, p. 134). An article by Nirad C. Chaudhari entitled ‘*Passage to and From India*’ opines that Forster’s realism is universally accepted as a strictly documented record of modern India. *A Passage to India* is a study of Problem, a study of races with different heritage and history. The relations between Indians and Anglo-Indians have been sharply portrayed by both Scott and Forster. Anil Kumar Verma in his writing *Paul Scott: A Critical Study of His Novels* opines that

The sketch of Mrs. Turton is comic, amusing and yet it throws light on the role of English ladies and wives of bureaucrats played the complicating relations between the English and Indians. Major Callendar’s treatment of Aziz, Ronny’s rebuff administered to the attention - seeking Muslim doctor at Fielding’s tea party, Ronald Merrick’s cruel handling of the innocent. Hindu boys implicated in a false rape case and refusal of entry to the Indians at Susan’s wedding party show both author’s trenchant exposure of Indo-British social relations in those periods (p. 172).

Proper setting in *The Quartet* talks about fully dramatised lives of many of the characters. Scott is preoccupied with the effect the loss of India had on the Anglo-Indian community, on people like the Laytons and the families in whose circles they move in Mayapore, Ranpur and Pankot. The out-break of the world war in 1939 aggravate the Indian situation as the congress ministries resigned in protest on India being dragged into
the vortex of war without consulting its people. Though Bose was elected President of the Congress for the second time, Gandhian wing in the Congress put up so much of opposition that he resigned on 29 April 1939 and organised Forward Bloc. “Feeling the pulse of time, the Mahatma in October 1940 declared that he had decided to commence resistance to the Governments war efforts. But Subhash Bose felt that Mahatma did not put his heart in the consequent struggle” (*The Indian Struggle*, p. 348).

New locations are carefully detailed in the last volume of the *Raj Quartet, A Division of the Spoils*. New characters appear and old characters are not permitted to coast along without appropriate change to match the evolving political scene in 1947. It covers the period between the defeat of Germany in May 1945 to the Independence of India in August 1947. With the fall of Singapore on 15 February 1942, the British were eager to have good-will of the Indians. In March the Cripps mission arrived in India to secure by negotiations with the Indian political leaders. “A sufficient body of agreement upon its policies” (V.P. Menon, p. 119). But the Indian co-operation could not be won on empty promises. Azad *India Wins Freedom* quoted Nehru “war has given India an opportunity for achieving her freedom, we must not lose it by depending upon a mere promise” (p. 53). Viceroy flew to Delhi and after two weeks announced a conference of Indian leaders at Simla hoping to ease the situation. There had been private differences of opinion between M.A. Kasim and his distinguished colleagues. A few days later the British electorate had voted overwhelmingly for the socialists and in doing so, relegated the arch-imperialist.

Ronald Merrick turned up in Bombay in connection with an interrogation of Havildar Karim Muzzafir Khan. Muzzafir Khan was ex-prisoner of war captured in
North Africa. He had come with a letter from Capt. Purvis for the Maharanees and met Bronowsky and Ahmed. Merrick stayed in Bombay with the Graces. Graces were immensely helpful to Perron when Purvis committed suicide.

Merrick waited to see Sarah Layton and her father and the handful of soldiers released from hospital arrived from Delhi on the Ranpur train and found the Colonel “docile, good humoured, quietly intent on the morning papers with their latest reports of the significance of the bomb of ‘devastating power’ which the Americans had dropped on the Japanese city of Hiroshima on Monday morning” (p. 230). On the evening of August 14, 1945 things were taking place of much greater consequence in Tokyo, where “the Japanese war cabinet, persuaded by the Emperor, had finally decided to ‘bear the unbearable’. In the past week since the incident in Hiroshima and it’s follow-up in Nagasaki, it had become obvious to them that the bomb owning governments said unconditional surrender this was precisely what was meant” (p. 231). This brought an end to World War-II.

The central and provincial elections were held in the beginning of 1946 in accordance with the Labour Party’s desire to resolve the political crisis in India. The worst communal riot began on 16 August 1946 in Indian history. It began in Calcutta but soon spread out to the districts of Noakhali and Comilla (both now in Bangladesh) where a large number of people were killed. These provoked reprisals in Bihar and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru had to fly to Bihar to quell the disturbances. The Constituent Assembly met on 9 December 1946, and elected Babu Rajendra Prasad as its President. The members of the Muslim League had not joined the Constituent Assembly and in the wake of the communal riot, the tensed atmosphere continued. Sir Cyril Radcliffe was
appointed to oversee the partition of India. The Indian Independence Bill was passed without dissent in the British Parliament on 1 July 1947 and on the 15th of August of the same year, British rule in India came to an end.

Incisive humours with a keen political insight are the qualities of a true political cartoonist. Political cartoons, an inseparable aspect of responsible journalism express a wide range of options. Paul Scott has made effective use of such interesting medium of communication in *A Division of Spoils*. The author describes through cartoons of Halki the various stages in the ultimate retreat of the British. Halki is the pseudonym of a young Brahmin cartoonist whose name is Shankar Lal. He is from Punjab but lives in Bombay. One of Halki’s cartoons shows Mohammed Ali Kasim leaving the crumbling Muslim League. According to Halki’s cartoon, Kasim has left the Congress in the hope of a better political future with the Muslim League. The sun of the hope of an office is rising from behind the crumbling office of the Muslim League and Kasim has his eyes on it. Halki tries to bring the idea that the partition of the country changes Kasim’s allegiance from the Congress to the Muslim League:

The lowering of the blinds caught the imagination of an Indian cartoonist who portrayed the car (identified as that of the ex-chief minister by the initials MAK on one of its doors) with all its windows, including the driver’s, shuttered high speed (smoke rings from the exhaust) from a once imposing but now crumbling portal inscribed ‘Congress’ towards a distant horizon with a sun marked ‘Hopes of Office’ rising behind a broken down bungalow on whose rickety verandah the leader of the Muslim league, Mr. Jinnah, could be seen conferring with several of his associates (p. 4).

Paul Scott states about Sir Winston Churchill in two cartoons of Halki. By cartoons it is understood that the contemporary princes were to be convinced by Churchill not to join the federation of Indian states. Churchill being an imperialist tries to delay Indian independence. Paul Scott illustrates the hypocrisy of Churchill’s attitude
towards the national movement in India. Churchill celebrated the demise of imperialist Germany and the fall of its dictator but differs in Indian independence. Churchill encourages communal disharmony in India in an attempt to delay the coming of independence. Churchill is being depicted in one of cartoons wearing “a Jinnah-shaped fez” (p. 6). Symbolising the British leader’s preference for the Muslim League leader. Thus, by utilising the Jinnah factor and the princes, Churchill sought to extend British rule in India:

In the new cartoon Mohammed Ali Kasim was shown sitting cross-legged at a low table in the company of the Nawab and Mr. Jinnah. The table heavily spread with a feast was labelled ‘Islam’. Beneath it, only head and arms visible were the struggling body of India. From behind a pillar the puckish face of Winston Churchill peered, the head sporting a Jinnah-shaped fez to depict the English leader’s alleged preference for Muslims and sympathy with their aspirations . . . (p. 6).

The other cartoon of Halki on the Churchill theme places the English leader against the background of his resounding victory in Europe in the Second World War. Churchill wants to capitalise on the allied victory and seek re-election from the British electorate. The British people gave Churchill a standing ovation on the occasion of the victory. Paul Scott’s description (Halki’s cartoon) testifies to his deep feeling of anguish at the hypocrisy and the unjust desire of Winston Churchill to Indian independence:

Another cartoon on the following day depicted Mr. Churchill receiving an ovation from a moronic (or badly drawn) and adoring British public, to whom he was about to appeal for re-election, holding in one arm a baby labelled ‘Victory in Europe’, with the other arm extended presentation its hand in giant perspective and the famous V-sign, but with two fingers raised the wrong way round. One of these fingers was labelled ‘Jinnah’ and the other ‘Princely India’. Clenched in the curled fist below the fingers was limp body representing Indian unity and nationalism (p. 6).

Lord Mountbatten, the Viceroy of India, replaced Lord Wavell between 1943 and early 1947. The British administrator of India contributed to the ultimate parting of the
Hindus and the Muslims and was denounced in the cartoons of Halki. The cartoonist showed special favour to the Muslim League leaders. In March 1945, the Viceroy flew to London and came back with a proposal. The proposal states that all the members of the Viceroy’s Executive Council were to be Indians except Wavell and the Commander-in-Chief. The Cabinet Mission also came during the tenure of Lord Wavell’s viceroyalty with the plan to constitute a Constituent assembly to frame the Union Constitution. Among others, the Union Constitution was to be framed by members elected “on a communal basis” (Tara Chand, p. 418). Paul Scott contributed all these things to the creation of schism in the country. Paul Scott describes a cartoon of Halki on the Wavell theme that neither the congress nor the Muslim League was enthusiastic about the Cabinet Mission plan. Thus Scott illustrates:

The cartoon was captioned ‘Box-Wallah’ and portrayed Wavell in the garb of an itinerant Indian merchant and purveyor of ladies dress materials, squatting on his hunkers on the verandah of a European bungalow, recommending his wares to a gathering of memsahibs who bore remarkable resemblances to Bapu, Nehru, Patel, Tara Singh, Maulana Azad and Mohammed Ali Jinnah. Jinnah was sitting somewhat apart from ‘her’ colleagues, consulting a glossy magazine marked ‘The Pakistan Ladies’ Home Journal but none of them was responding to the pleas of the box-wallah or to the sight of the avalanche of silks and woolens, he was flinging hopefully in all directions (lengths marked; New Executive Council-Indian patterns; central Assembly Dress Lengths . . . Dominion Status Fabrics-Slightly Soiled) (p. 457).

Wavell is unable to attract the attention of Indian leaders. The attitude of Jinnah was one of indifferences because he was more interested in the creation of Pakistan than in the independence of a united India. Halki, therefore, presents this leader as not only sitting separately, but also engrossed in a Pakistani journal. A minor cartoon on the Wavell theme shows him conducting a conference of “brawling Indian ministers” (p.462) in a room with an open door leading to the Constituent Assembly (which no one is
prepared to enter) and a window allowing the sight of a riotous mob. Halki presents Wavell sitting on an oversized chair and trying to make out something among the participants. The impression is that the situation was beyond the control of the Viceroy.

The interpretation from Halki’s cartoon gathers that the existing Indian politicians were not brawling and notwithstanding the reduced political power of the viceroy, they worked together. It seems that Halki’s dislike of Lord Wavell has split over and some have fallen on the Indian politicians. Halki is mistaken in his opinion that Indian politicians are not interested in the Constituent Assembly. Paul Scott’s opinion is biased. The imperialistic view of the novelist is observed. Thus literature is dehistorised. The Assembly on 9 December 1946 elected Dr. Rajendra Prasad as its President. History testifies that Lord Mountbatten was one of the more enlightened Viceroy’s that the British Government sent to India. He was sympathetic towards India and the Indians. During the Second World War, he had been in command of the allied forces in South-East Asia and has given a glorious account of himself by forcing Japan out of Burma and South-East Asia. Paul Scott describes Halki’s reception of this change:

Halki’s rustic house was a simplified version of the main entrance to Viceregal House frame one showed Wavell outside the first of the twin doors. The sky above was black. Bulging monsoon clouds were pierced by a fork of lightening coming from of the heraldic, rather ancient, and winged lion, labelled ‘Imperialism circa 1857’. In the second frame the sky was bland, lit by a sparkling little sun held aloft by a frisky airborne lamb (with Attlee face) labelled ‘Imperialism, circa 1947’. Below this bland sky the gaunt figure of Wavell had retired into the gloom of Viceregal House and out of the other door had come the fine-weather figure of a smart toy soldier (Mountbatten), magnificently uniformed, taking the salute, smiling excessively and exuding sweetness and light (p.463).

The essence of this cartoon shows the significant change in practice of British imperialism in India, which has come since 1857. The power and influence of British
imperialism is observed. But by 1947, the British providential responsibility relinquishes and leads to independent India. The course of history changed the administrator Wavell with Atlee. Mountbatten facilitated to bring an honourable end to British rule in India. It is therefore that Halki welcomes the replacement of gloomy Wavell by Mountbatten.

Paul Scott presents the last few stages of British Raj which led to the independence of India by the cartoons of Halki. In one of the cartoons of Halki the British Indian empire has been imagined as a large shop which is winding up its business. The stocks of this shop are therefore being sold at reduced prices. The transition of power from British to India is seen through the cartoons of Halki. There is an intense competition among Indian political parties, religious communities and such others to take the place of the British as the rulers of India. Every kind of political leader has come with his followers. Paul Scott not only well-informs about the contemporary political situation but also has the political acumen to foresee the contenders of power as were likely to be after the British had left India. There is a queue of the Sikhs, of the Hindu Mahasabha and of the Congress. Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Mahatma Gandhi head the Congress queue. The building in which the shop is housed is symbolises the British Empire. Paul Scott’s description continues with the cartoon as an older building labelled ‘Imperial Stores’ (Paramountcy 1857) Limited. The shop symbolises the princely states, which had entered into an agreement with the British Government, according to which the states would be free but the British Government would exercise paramountcy over them. In Halki’s cartoon, this shop is announcing that the business is as usual while the British rule in India is coming to an end, the native princes are unaffected by it. In the Memorandum of States Treaties and Paramountcy which was placed before the
Chancellor of the Chamber of Princes on May 22, 1946. The Cabinet Mission promised that after the British Government gave independence to British India, paramountcy would automatically lapse and the princely states would immediately get back those powers which had been taken over by the British:

His Majesty’s Government will cease to exercise the powers of Paramountcy. This means that the rights of the States which flow from their relationship to the Crown will no longer exist and that all the rights surrendered by the States to the Paramount power will return to the States (Edwardes Michael, p. 92).

Lok Sabha abolished the special privileges of the former Indian rulers in 1970. But at the time of independence there was no threat of any such action. Paul Scott implies, for the erstwhile Indian Princes that at the time independence business were as usual. In the same cartoon, Ballabh Bhai Patel is presented as a policeman taking down the number of maharaja’s limousine. This testifies to the opinion that Patel did not like the Indian princes. The geographical and political imperialism of Britain was replaced after India’s independence by Anglo-American economic imperialism. Thus through one of the cartoons of Halki Paul Scott suggests that:

Facing the main frontage on the other side of the road there was work in progress on a giant multistoried building, only the ground-floor of which was completed and occupied. A placard announced: Anglo-American Atomic and Commercial Enterprises Inc and Ltd. (Successors to Box-Wallah and Co.) Through the ground floor windows you could see men at work at all offices. An American executive sat with his feet on a desk, smoking a cigar and using three telephones. A British executive sat with his feet under the desk, smoking a pipe talking to only one. Queuing to enter the building was a hybrid collection of Indian businessmen consulting attendant lawyers who were in turn consulting draft contracts. Already in the building too, were figures representing the great Indian industrialists (Tata and Birla) (p.466).

There was an influx of both British and American multinational companies in India during British Raj and after independence. Paul Scott rightly opines that the
Americans were more successful than British. The author suggests the impression that the future of the economic influence in India of the British and the Americans is quite bright. As a safeguard the British Government had not encouraged large-scale industrialisation in India as goods manufactured in Britain had in India. Independent India needed a strong industrial base as the foundation of economic prosperity. The poverty of the Indian masses has not made large scale industrial investment possible. As the rate of literacy increased the number of unemployment increased. The British and American industrialists traced these factors. They sought to increase commercial influence in India. The British put an end to the political control. Indian businessmen in Halki’s cartoon are symbolic of the collaborations. Indian industrialists with British and American firms. The British and the American entrepreneurs entered Indian market through collaborations with large Indian business houses. *A Division of Spoils* was published in 1975 when Americans had penetrated deep into the Indian industrial territory.

Paul Scott’s Mohammed Ali Kasim character is quite nearer to that of the great Muslim leader of the Indian Congress, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad. Muslim leaders of India, Mohammed Ali Kasim are an advocate of united India. He is of the opinion that India in future would be best if it is united and free. His allegiance is “to the twin cause of freedom and unity” (p.461).

This is the political faith of Mohammed Ali Kasim. He is in favour of communal amity. It may be recalled in this context that Maulana Abul Kasim Azad who had been the President of the Indian National Congress consulted his “Hindu colleagues in the Congress Party” and “drew up his own idea of how the communal differences might be resolved and unitary India preserved” (Majumdar, R.C, p. 990).
The contemporary Muslim leaders in the narrator’s point of view were far from being unanimous on the issue of the division of the country and the creation of Pakistan. It also presents that only the Muslim League was demanding Pakistan. The Congress battled the British to Quit India. But the League Divide and Quit, Kasim’s son is arrested while fighting in one of the Azad Hind Fauj units. At first Kasim supports Netaji and the Azad Hind Fauj but later he changes his attitude. He says that he shall “do nothing to help nourish this idea that the INA are heroes” (p. 402). Kasim like many other people feels that who joined Netaji were traitors and independent India may not want to employ such officers.

Kasim is of the opinion that victory for Subhas Chandra Bose would have meant victory for dictatorship. His implication is that he himself is a democrat while Bose had the temperament of a dictator. Kasim shares the general British dislike for Subhas Bose, the man who could cheat the British police and disappear from his Calcutta residence. Kasim also shares the dislike which some contemporary Congressmen harboured against Subhas Bose. The question of dictatorship is only an excuse through which Kasim expresses his dislike for Bose and the Azad Hind Fauj:

Let in your army one man of the suspect kind I have in mind and you plant the seed of military dictatorship, you nurture a man who will throw away his commission again and challenge and even overthrow a properly constituted civil authority. I do not want a government of generals. I do not want to see such an India (p.443).

In 1939, Subhas Bose became the President of the Indian National Congress by defeating Pattabhi Sitaramayya who was Gandhi’s nominee for the presidency. Subhas Chandra Bose was one of the most intelligent of the contemporary congressmen having been elected to the president of the party in 1938. He was an astute politician and a peerless
organiser. Bose, single-handed formed the Indian Legion and the Free Indian centre in Germany. He successfully organised the Azad Hind Fauj with the help of Japanese to invade British India to make India independent. Kasim like many other politicians of his times understands this and hence his dislike for Bose. In this context, Michael Edwards says:

The death of Bose was now public knowledge and he had acquired a halo of martyrdom and apotheosis. Congress leaders, who had hated and feared Bose were not at first anxious to use the INA propaganda. After all, Bose had actually fought and died in an attempt to free India; the surviving Congress leaders had merely gone to jail (p. 452).

It would also be interesting for us to remember that in his Presidential address in February 1938, when he was elected President of the Haripura Congress. Subhas Bose said, “My term of office as the Congress President will be devoted to resist the unwanted federal system, with all its undemocratic and anti-national features” (The Last Days of British Raj, p. 21). The narrator analyses the activities and the political implications of the Azad Hind Fauj. History testifies that the Azad Hind Fauj was partially formed by the prisoners of war. The Fauj also attracted many civilian volunteers. The following testimony of S.A. Ayer: “This was the genesis of the Indian National Army which later attracted thousands of civilian Indian youths in East Asia, and enabled Netaji in course of time to raise no fewer than three combatant divisions totally over 30,000 men under arms (The Last Days of the British Raj, p.136).

Paul Scott is sympathetic towards the officers in the Indian army viewing that the gentleman hypocritical. He allows Kasim’s son Sayed to say:

“Hold this position, Kasim old chap”, Colonel Baker said. So I held it while the rest the battalion and all the British officers disappeared . . . Here in India, father, the army looks very sound, very pukka, very good form and very secure, very gentlemanly. In Burma and Malaya you
realised a lot of it was eyewash. They never wanted us. They never trusted us (p. 414).

Like many other politicians of his time, Kasim himself is convinced and he also tried to convince Sayed that if the Fauj had been successful the Union Jack would have been replaced by the Rising Sun:

The Japanese were pretended to be friendly towards the Indians as fellow-Asians, but you did not trust them. If they invaded India and as seemed likely again defeating the British the very clear danger was that far from gaining the independence which the British themselves had promised, India would again become subject to a foreign government, this time a Japanese government (p. 416).

Through British characters the author tried to present Subhas Bose as puppet of the Japanese in *The Towers of Silence* and *A Division of Spoils*. The Japanese government was on an exceptionally cordial relation with Rash Behari Bose, a revolutionary leader against the British Raj in India, whom the leadership of the struggle going on there was taken over by Subhas Bose. History indicates that either explicitly or implicitly, the Japanese never indicated on securing independence India. In Japanese view India would become a vassal state with Subhas Bose as its puppet leader. Kasim, expresses that when Subhas went to Tokyo to attend the Greater East Asia Conference, he was received by the emperor of Japan as the head of the Provisional Government of Free India. Hideki Tojo, the Prime Minister of Japan was sympathetic to the aspirations of the Indian people. After his discussions with Subhas Bose regarding Indo-Japanese co-operation in an armed invasion of India, he made the following declaration to the Diet: “Japan is firmly resolved to extend all means in order to help to expel and eliminate from India the Anglo-Saxon influences which are the enemy of the Indian people, and enable India to achieve full independence in the true sense of the term”(Tara Chand, p. 417).
At one point in the *Towers of Silence*, Ronald Merrick, archetype of the imperialist British administrator admits that the leaders of the Fauj were conscious of the presence of the probability of a change in the Japanese attitude. The imperial British administrators become alive, jostle in our imagination and re-enact the great days once again by the picturisation of the novelist.

**Rhythm of Those Days**

Sarah Layton is a strong enough character to withstand Merrick although she is unfailingly polite to him. Sarah too dislikes him instinctively; a fact which Merrick realises but ignores, for she is a member of his ‘chosen’ family, although he does warn Perron, who does like Sarah, that she has a “domineering instinct” (p. 101). Sarah and Merrick are at opposite ends of Scott’s “moral continuum”. Merrick exhibits his real nature, his feelings of inadequacy and his shyness to Sarah when she visits him in hospital. He reaffirms her earlier opinion that “he was an appalling man whom she didn’t trust” (p. 224). Merrick tells Sarah about his thought of being in the police:

> There’s the constant irritation of being straight jacketed by policy from above . . . You find yourself automatically implementing a policy you feel passionately is wrong and the only thing you can do short of resigning is detach yourself from the reality of the problem, from the human issue if you like. You become a rubberstamp . . . I sometimes think that if I’d done something terribly wrong the rubberstamp would have endorsed it (p.221-2).

Sarah says to her father that she prefers Merrick if he has moral courage instead of physical courage, “a bit of moral cowardice . . . Or what it is that makes you admit there can be two sides to a question, other points of view as good as your own” (p. 366). But she realises when he is in hospital that he has a weight on his mind and wonders astutely:
Was it the (Bibighar) victims, not Teddie who now lay like a weight on that conscience of his which he said he could examine but give a clean bill to? Perhaps that was the way into him, to become his victim and then to haunt his conscience . . . All the people whom he chose as victim lay scattered on his threshold (p. 418).

Merrick chooses Sarah’s sister Susan to be his wife. But he enters his chosen family by the back door, for Susan is emotionally unstable, and even Mildred cannot interfere and risk her daughter’s sanity.

Susan has had a complete mental breakdown after the birth of her son, Edward Bingham. It is this boy whom Merrick really covets. Edward does not threaten Merrick’s self-esteem in any way, in fact, the child’s admiration and love are a soothing balm to the emotionally scarred Merrick who can relax and be natural with the boy. Susan cares for Merrick and cries when she sees his chafed stump of an arm.

Neither Susan nor Edward appears to be adversely affected by Merrick’s scarred face or artificial arm. It is only Count Bronowsky who notices that the only time he saw Merrick “glow with the old conviction, was when he was with the child” (p. 561). At last, Merrick has someone to whom he can talk and give affection without feeling that he is on show. It is young Edward who has Barbie’s “The Jewel in her Crown” hanging up on his wall, and can explain its allegorical meaning to Perron. Merrick has unconsciously believes in man-bap and has given the picture to the one person he loves, for to one with Merrick’s artistic taste, the picture has no other merit. The influence of Merrick on the little boy is seen in his wearing Pathan clothes and in his precociousness: the boy is very rude and talks like an adult. The family is never together in The Quartet. Scott’s novels endure the presence of delicately balanced sentences. The author’s sense of life pulsates through the pages that cause Scott’s novels to be read and re-read. Edward’s ingenious
remarks, to find out the degree of confidence Merrick has in this little boy: “Daddy says Mummy saw an angle once, an angel in a circle of fire, but I mustn’t talk about it because it upsets her” (p. 505). Edward was that angel. Even Susan imitates Merrick’s tone and opinions: “you have to do all sorts of things that so-called pukka members of the Raj pretend don’t have to be done” (p.510). Susan’s insecurity and inability to understand Merrick are demonstrated when he dies and she finds a tenuous hold on reality in his memory: “He was the most secure person I’ve ever known and when Edward talks to servants the way he does I sometimes think he’s just copying Ronnie. Ronnie was always very firm. But fair . . . the servants adored him” (p. 513). It is when Susan and Edward have been sent back to the cool hills of Pankot that Merrick chooses his next victim, Laura the wife of Nigel Rowan, who is still suffering from the shock of her interment by the Japanese. Rowan sees Laura as a victim of Merrick, who only pays attention to her when her husband is away, but Laura is a strong personality who can break away by herself. When Laura finds a snake in her bath, she asks Merrick to deal with it as Rowan is away: “It was Merrick who killed the snake. Yes Perron thought, Merrick was bound to come into the picture . . . I imagine he got the last Ounce of drama out of it” (p. 541).

“Merrick had enticed the snake with his artificial hand and let the snake’s head slip from his black glove. Laura ‘was at once sick, all over her elegant shoes’, leaves the house and refuses to see the apologetic Merrick again”(p.542). As Rowan firmly believes that Merrick knows of the private investigation into Kumar’s case, he sees the victimisation of his wife as Merrick’s revenge on him. Perron, on the other hand, is convinced that because Merrick was posted to Singapore he knew all about the war
criminals and the conditions of the prisoners, and that is how he alone managed to get
Laura to tell her experiences. When Rowan finds this idea a little far-fetched, Perron responds: “Nogel—for me, nothing was far-fetched with Merrick. I believe he had a
photographic memory” (p.545).

Although Merrick becomes socially acceptable by his marriage to Susan, he never receives the social acceptance he really wants. The alienated Merrick becomes a victim of his own paranoia and the extremist Hindu faction, which never has allowed him to forget the Bibighar affair.

The persecution of Merrick by the Indians has gone on for five years, and it has taken the forms of cabalistic signs, anonymous letters, stone throwing, the appearance of Kumar’s Aunt Shalini dressed in widow’s white. A lady’s rusty bicycle, sometimes with rotten pork chops in the saddlebag and probably a snake until after the Bibighar affair, and his obsession about Kumar has been observed. He is always reminded of Bibighar.

Merrick’s resistance is lowered, however, when his Indian persecutors resort to more subtle methods. The new form of persecution plays on Merrick is only being used as a political pawn to be killed at the most expedient moment. The new form of persecution plays on Merrick’s repressed weakness, an attraction for handsome Indian boys. So, “Merrick is unaware of the pattern in the arrival of the non Marathi boys who come to his house looking for work, and succumbs to one night of pleasure with young Aziz. However, Aziz reveals to Merrick the aspect of homosexuality, the sadomasochism, the sense of social inferior” (p. 571), and, the next night he viciously beats the boy’s face. Other boys, accompanied by a Pathon, follow, but Merrick has descended to paranoia: “he wanted there to be a man in the nullah. He wanted there to be a stone
thrown at his horse” (p. 571). How angry Merrick would have been to know that he was a “convenient victim” used to aggravate racial tension: “Perhaps he hoped that his murder would be avenged in some splendidly spectacular way, in a kind of Wagnerian climax, the raj emerging from the twilight and sweeping down from the hills with flaming swords” (p. 571). When Merrick dies, no one mourns. With Merrick’s death comes the death of the Raj, and his moral, physical, and mental deterioration can be paralleled to the disintegration of the Raj which Merrick both venerated and despised.

The relationship between Hari and Daphne is of the relationship between India and England, especially in the way it tries to cross the colour bar and is crushed underneath the weight of prejudice and discrimination. Hari’s fading into obscurity at the end of the tetrology is the only logical thing that could happen to him, living on the memories of an impossible dream that only ever really lived in the vitality of his father’s illusion. The only identity he does possess in India is given to him as a prisoner. After his release proves that outside the walls of his confinement there is nothing at all.

Susan Layton is a victim from the other side, a victim of the “crumbling pillars of the edifice”. Her life is wound about the very foundations that are collapsing, and she finds increasingly that she has nothing left to hold on to, lacking the inner strength of her elder sister. Perron is struck by the thought that Susan, as a victim, was ‘ready-made’, and is appalled at the idea of her impending marriage to Ronald Merrick.

Ahmed Kasim is an example of a physical victim of partition, a horrible paradox when one remembers that Independence was supposed to solve the problem and calm the troubles, instead of acting like the opening of what Scott calls ‘Pandora’s Box’. The irony is that Ahmed has rejected political and religious discrimination, and refuses to
tempt providence through more than a platonic relationship with Sarah. He seems to suppress feelings of this kind, giving them release through the flight of his beautiful hawk, which he does not always flight at prey unless, as Scott suggests, “he himself were the prey. His Muslim background catches up with him, and he spills his blood in a pointless, symbolic dismemberment at the side of a railway-line, a symbol of disintegration alongside a symbol of progress illustrating the actual stagnancy of the supposed release of a continent. All that is left to mark the end of his life is “a bottle of whisky, perhaps, and a clove or two of garlic” (p. 593).

V.R. Badiger mentions Scott’s use of metaphors to complete the picture of the decaying Raj, the massacre of hundreds of Hindus and Muslims is symbolically foreshadowed by the murder of Ahmed Kasim. The recurrent images, symbols and metaphors like the image of dancing Siva, the image of the sleeping Lord Vishnu, the christening shawl of butterflies, the picture of the Jewel in the Crown, the scorpion in the circle of fire, boxes, nets, veils, fireflies, and garden-help create a rhythmic pattern in this epic novel. Scott’s artistic casting his novel in metaphorical mould really compels even the eminent critics to consider it to be a great novel of twentieth-century English fiction (p.79).

The writer’s sympathies are not only with the Indians but also with the English people who has devoted life’s work to the Raj and are now no longer needed or wanted.

Anil Kumar Verma in his work Paul Scott: A Critical Study of his Novels illustrates:

In Feb. 1947, Mr. Attlee, Prime Minister of England, declared that the British government would leave India before June, 1948 and Lord Mountbatten was appointed Governor General of India. After prolonged discussion with the Congress and Muslim League leaders, he put forward
his famous June 3 plan in which he suggested the partition of the country into India and Pakistan. The Congress and the Muslim League accepted both the scheme and on 18th July 1947, the Indian Independence Act, 1947 was passed. The Act was a great landmark in the Anglo-Indian relations as it marked the ending of the British rule in India. It was recognition of the rights of the Indians to be free but unfortunately it divided India into two parts: India and Pakistan (p. 33).

The British Raj with its self-liquidation ceased to exercise it’s authority in India but left a deep impact on it’s people.

**Conclusion**

Paul Scott states that the characters and events of the *Raj Quartet* were imaginary, but that “the framework was as historically accurate as I could make it”. (*Author’s Note and Acknowledgements*) *A Division of the Spoils* is the last in a sequence of four novels about the closing years of British rule in India. The characters were imaginary. So were the events. The story covers the humbling and hasty decamping of the British: the precipitous concession of power to a country fiercely bent on division; the travails of an honorable Muslim Congressman, Mohammed Ali Kasim, and his sons, one of whom had deserted to the Japan-directed Indian National Army. The quandary of the Nawab of the small fictitious princely state of Mirat, left in the lurch by the lapse of British Paramountcy; the suicide of a dysentery-debilitated and maladapted British officer; the prowling of the haunted Ronald Merrick. The new man on the scene is Sergeant Guy Perron, once a pupil of a public school called Chillingborough, which Hari Kumar also attended when he lived in England. It was Guy who returned in 1947 to be an observer of India on the eve of Independence; this assignment soon turns into a personal inquiry into the truth behind the hushed-up story of Lieutenant-Colonel Ronald Merrick’s death in Mirat. The tragic consequences of India-Pakistan partition are dramatized in a horrific
train massacre in which Ahmed Kasim, the son of Mohammed Ali Kasim, is targeted by rioters and chooses to sacrifice him in order to protect the rest of the people in his carriage.